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# Marine Hardship Tours Shortened

*Corps Hopes to Lessen Guards' Vulnerability to Espionage*

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The Marine Corps, in reponse to espionage and fraternization investigations of its diplomatic security guards, is reducing the tours of duty for guards assigned to "hardship" posts in 14 cities, according to Pentagon officials.

The decision to cut tours from 15 months to 12 at such diplomatic posts as Moscow and Leningrad is intended to reduce Marines' vulnerability to Soviet espionage activities, Defense Department spokesman Robert B. Sims said.

Most of the hardship posts are in communist countries where the guards are subject to travel restrictions and limited social contacts because of the "high security vulnerability," Sims said.

Sims said a slightly shorter tour length in those cities "where there is an obvious opportunity for hostile intelligence to work upon our people . . . would be one way to help us cope with that intelligence threat."

Three Marine security guards assigned to duty in the Soviet Union have been charged with espionage

for allegedly allowing Soviet agents access to the U.S. embassy and consulate. Military officials allege that all three men were seduced by Soviet women who later persuaded them to assist in espionage activities.

In addition to Moscow and Leningrad, tours will be shortened for Beijing, China; East Berlin, Germany; Warsaw, Poland; Beirut, Lebanon; Belgrade and Zagreb, Yugoslavia; Bucharest, Hungary; Prague, Czechoslovakia; Sofia, Bulgaria; Kabul, Afghanistan; Havana, Cuba, and Managua, Nicaragua.

In other issues related to the espionage investigation, Sims denied reports that one of the accused Marines was offered immunity from prosecution in return for his testimony against a colleague who also has been accused of espionage.

A defense attorney for Cpl. William Bracy said Wednesday that his client said military officials had offered him immunity if he would testify against Sgt. Clayton J. Lone-tree, who was the first guard charged with espionage at the embassy in Moscow.

An April 7 memorandum to the

Marine Corps commandant, Gen. P.X. Kelley, by the service's judge advocate division said, "Decisions as to whether to confer immunity on Corporal Bracy, whether to enter into plea negotiations, etc. must be made in the next few days."

"Immunity has been neither approved nor extended to any of the accused in these cases," Sims told reporters at a Pentagon news briefing. "Immunity can only be granted by the general court-martial convening authority after coordination with the attorney general."

Sims also said 27 new Marine guards have reported for duty at the embassy in Moscow and three more are awaiting entry visas. He said 13 members of the previous unit have not yet left the Soviet capital.

The Marine Corps is temporarily assigning an officer to the Moscow unit, where the highest-ranking Marine used to be a noncommissioned officer.

The corps also will replace guards who have been recalled from Leningrad and Vienna, Austria. Officials said those transfers have not yet been completed.